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ABSTRACT

A study investigated how future teachers viewed themselves as writers and writing teachers and how these identities were being addressed in teacher education programs. Subjects, 226 student teachers at Middle Tennessee State University, responded to a questionnaire designed to measure both writing apprehension and beliefs about the role and responsibility of all teachers in teaching writing. In addition, 60 teacher education students responded in journal form to questions about themselves as writers. The responses were analyzed for recurring patterns and themes. Teacher education faculty responded to questions related to how and to what extent the identity of the teacher as a writer and a teacher of writing was treated in their respective courses and programs. Results indicated that: (1) future teachers' feelings about writing were heavily influenced by the nature of the writing task and whether the writing was being evaluated; (2) most future teachers desired more writing instruction than they received; (3) future teachers lacked confidence in evaluating the writing of others; (4) the identity of the teacher as a writer and teacher of writing was addressed minimally in teacher preparation programs. Recommendations for improvement of teacher education include allowing for more student choice in writing assignments; using journals extensively as tools for expression and reflection; reducing writing apprehension through process-oriented approaches; and providing more training for teacher educators interested in developing the writing attitudes and abilities of their students. (Contains 96 references and 5 tables of data. Survey instruments are attached.) (Author/RS)

FUTURE TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEMSELVES AS WRITERS AND TEACHERS OF WRITING: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the
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Running head: WRITERS AND TEACHERS OF WRITING

ABSTRACT

Much of teachers' resistance to integrating writing instruction in their classroom comes from their poor perceptions of themselves as writers, and uncertainty about how to teach and foster writing. The present study was conducted to discover how future teachers viewed themselves as writers and writing teachers and how these identities were being addressed in teacher education programs.

Two hundred twenty-six student teachers responded to a questionnaire designed to measure both writing apprehension and beliefs about the role and responsibility of all teachers in teaching writing. In addition, 60 teacher education students responded in journal form to questions about themselves as writers. These responses were analyzed for recurring patterns and themes. Finally, faculty from a large teacher education program were asked to respond to questions related to how and to what extent the identity of the teacher as a writer and a teacher of writing was treated in their respective courses and programs. State guidelines for teacher education, along with course outlines, were also reviewed.

Results revealed that future teachers' feelings about writing are heavily influenced by the nature of the writing task and whether or not the writing is being evaluated. In addition, most future teachers desire more writing instruction than what they receive. Regarding teaching writing, future teachers believe in the importance of writing across the curriculum and teaching writing as a process, but do not express a desire to teach writing. Specifically, they lack confidence in evaluating the writing of others. It was also discovered that the identity of the

teacher as a writer and teacher of writing is addressed minimally in teacher preparation programs.

Recommendations for improvement of teacher education in addressing these important issues include allowing for more student choice in writing assignments, using journals extensively as tools for expression and reflection, reducing writing apprehension through process-oriented approaches, building more writing instruction and training in teaching writing into the teacher education program, addressing the identity of the teacher as a writer earlier in the preparation program, and providing more training for teacher educators interested in developing the writing attitudes and abilities of their students.

INTRODUCTION

An examination of trends in writing performance of American students reveals little growth over the past two decades. According to the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), the majority of high school juniors in 1992 were not able to write persuasive or analytic essays considered adequate (Mullis, 1994). The quality of student writing in America has been deemed a "national embarrassment" (Silberman, 1989, p. 29). More recently, results of the state of Tennessee's first mandated essay tests showed 89% of fourth graders, 86% of eighth graders, and 81% of eleventh graders statewide to be deficient in writing skills (Benavides, 1994).

While some factors more commonly blamed for poor student literacy include the dominance of television, the lack of homework in school, or the breakup of the family, the most obvious reason for students not writing well is that they are not being taught how to write, nor are they being given opportunities to write in school (Smit, 1991). On the average, less than 7% of a student's school day is spent writing anything longer than a sentence (Silberman, 1989). When instruction occurs, it is often misdirected in that the conventions of language and writing mechanics are given precedence over free expression and connected discourse, a practice which contradicts our current understanding of the writing process and models for writing instruction (Deckert, 1988; Mavrogenes & Bezruczko, 1993).

It is likely that the lack of writing taking place inside and outside of the classroom and the apparent difference between current theory and

practice in teaching writing are merely symptoms of other problems. Factors that influence classroom practices must be understood. Not least among these are teachers' own dispositions, their beliefs about writing and writing instruction and their perceptions of themselves as writers.

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

For some time, scholars have contended that writing will not improve substantially until it becomes a central focus of the curriculum (Richardson, 1992). In addition, writing has long been believed to be one of the best ways of fostering thinking and learning in *all* subject areas, no longer belonging solely within the domain of the English/language arts classroom (Camp, 1982; Silberman, 1989; Smit, 1991). Although few would deny the theoretical soundness of efforts to integrate writing across the curriculum, these efforts have been met with a great deal of resistance from teachers over the years (Coles, 1991; Shuman, 1990).

Perhaps much of this resistance comes from teachers' own feelings of incompetence with writing, their poor perceptions of themselves as writers, and their uncertainty on how to teach and foster writing in their classrooms. In a study of 192 high school teachers with a mean experience of 12.9 years, Claypool (1980) found that those teachers who were more unsure of their own writing ability assigned significantly fewer writing assignments per year than those teachers who were less apprehensive and insecure. Because they are not confident writers themselves, they feel inadequately prepared to teach writing or to use

writing as a teaching tool (Claypool, 1980; Decker, 1986; Hollingsworth, 1988).

Writing experts agree that to teach writing effectively, teachers must first be writers (Bridge & Hiebert, 1985; Faery, 1993; Hollingsworth, 1988). This assumption has become one of the axioms of the current paradigm of writing pedagogy (Kail, 1986). Teachers must be able to discover and understand the process of writing for themselves to be able to effectively teach this process to students (Bridge & Hiebert, 1985; Richardson, 1992). Teachers must realize that writing can not be approached too hurriedly; that the revision process is complex (Wickwire, 1990). Teachers must participate in the process to see why and how students write and to know how to create the kind of conditions which facilitate skillful writing from students (Atwell, 1991). Writing is also viewed for teachers as a life-long learning process and a way for them to "maximize" their professional growth (Graves, 1990; Robbins, 1992).

A number of educators suggest that not only should teachers write, they should write *with* their students (Graves, 1984). These experts speak of a " writing community" where all members of the classroom, including teachers, are "full participants" (Kail, 1986, p. 90). One of the main bases for this suggestion comes from research on the instructional effectiveness of modeling. As Good and Brophy (1994) report, teachers who "act as models" help students "see how educated people use information and concepts learned in school" (p.236). It has been demonstrated conclusively that students benefit from teacher modeling (Richardson, 1992).

Susi (1984) cites many examples of students and teachers who felt writing together was a positive experience. In her words, writing provides

us with an opportunity to share the "visible part" of the learning process (p. 713). Johnson (1992) agrees that through modeling and sharing writing, or becoming a "member of the class," student metacognition and success in writing increase (p. 392). Students can see that even good writers struggle (Robbins, 1992). They especially grow as writers in an environment they perceive as empathetic (Hollingsworth, 1988). Teachers also learn to write better by writing with their students (Deen, 1992).

If it is true as Comstock (1992) states, that "whatever we wish to make important to our students must be important to us," then the inverse is likely true as well (p. 267). Teachers who are apprehensive or secretive about their writing are communicating something totally different to their students and may influence some students to share that apprehension (Frager, 1994; Larson, 1985).

In a case study analysis of three college freshmen writers, Gay (1983) concluded that teachers' beliefs about writing *do* shape student beliefs. In another study involving 65 college students, Evans (1993) reached a similar conclusion--that the school context is a significant determiner of student understanding of writing as a literate activity and of themselves as writers. This can be cause for concern, with many teachers bringing their negative attitudes about their abilities to write and teach writing to the classroom (Richardson, 1992).

Research has shown that teachers who write poorly or do not like to write do not encourage writing as a means of communication and give students fewer opportunities to write (Anspaugh, 1984). This may be because teachers tend to devote more time to subjects they like (Good & Brophy, 1994). Daly (1985) found in a study of 185 elementary and

secondary teachers that writing apprehension in teachers relates significantly to their perceptions of the relevance of writing in their content areas and the degree to which they emphasize writing in their classrooms.

Apprehensive writers are likely to feel less confident about their own writing (Davis, 1987). This in turn influences the frequency with which they write as well as the quality of their writing (Charney, Newman, & Palmquist, 1995; Daly, 1985). Attitudes and beliefs about themselves as writers may also affect their receptiveness to instruction and feedback (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). In addition, those who are less confident as writers are less likely to choose professions that require writing (Davis, 1987; Hillocks, 1986). This may suggest that apprehensive writers who choose teaching as a profession are not fully aware of their role as writers and writing instructors.

It is difficult to say to what extent a teacher of any given subject should be a competent writer. However, based on the evidence pertaining to the effects of writing apprehension, it is reasonable to expect teachers to exhibit a high enough degree of comfort that they are able to write without undue fear or apprehension (Bruton & Kirby, 1987). As Mavrogenes and Bezruczko (1993) concluded from a study of the writing influences on 1255 low-income African American children, "If teachers do not know how to teach writing and do not write themselves, their students will not like or do writing either" (p. 244).

A review of the literature offers little evidence that teacher training programs stress writing and teacher responsibility for writing instruction at the preservice level. There is evidence to the contrary, however. In a survey of 250 secondary education majors and 8 administrators of

NCATE approved colleges of education in the state of Florida, Kamman (1990) found 59% had never heard of the phrase "writing across the curriculum" and only 60% supported the tenets behind writing across the curriculum programs. Also, a mere 6%of those surveyed felt that addressing the issue of writing across the curriculum should be a focus of colleges of education. Few teacher education programs offer specific courses on how to teach writing and most state licensing agencies ignore the need for such (Silberman, 1989).

Bridge and Hiebert (1985) asked 233 teachers with an average 14.6 years of experience, two-thirds of which held a Master's degree, to rate their teacher education programs in preparing them to teach writing. On a scale of 0 (poor) to 3 (excellent), teachers gave their undergraduate programs a mean rating of 1 and their graduate programs a mean rating of .8. The literature indicates that teachers do not feel prepared to teach writing (Mavrogenes & Bezruczko, 1993).

There is also little in the recent literature on research in teacher education that relates to the writing proficiency of preservice teachers. Over a decade ago, Laine (1984) reported that in a study of 63 preservice teachers at the University of Cincinnati, 55% were found to be poor writers. Slightly earlier, Hodges and Bevington-Nash (1982) found that more than two-thirds of 117 teacher education students at Colorado State wrote essays judged to be at the ninth-grade level. It is difficult to say if these findings would hold true today. According to Shrofel (1991), however, earlier research has had little impact on how we train writing teachers today. The dominant model for writing instruction has changed very little in the past two decades.

As teacher educators, we need to continue to understand factors that influence the practice of writing instruction (Bridge & Hiebert, 1985). With the ultimate goal of teacher education programs being to produce effective teachers and thus positively impact student learning, we must try to measure the magnitude and define the parameters of the problems associated with writing instruction and develop a clear understanding of its specific characteristics (Daly, 1985). Apparently, teacher beliefs about writing and their role as writing instructors as well as teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers may significantly impact teaching practice and student learning. Therefore, in trying to address this issue in teacher education, it is imperative that we discover now to what extent future teachers view themselves as writers and writing teachers (Frager, 1994).

My purpose in conducting the present study was to describe and explore the currently held beliefs and self-perceptions of preservice teachers as they relate to writing and teaching writing. In addition, I sought to examine how the identity of the teacher as a writer and the teacher of writing is being addressed in preservice teacher education. The following research questions were generated to guide the inquiry:

1. To what extent are student teachers apprehensive about writing and teaching writing?

2. What are student teachers' perceptions about the role of the classroom teacher in student writing?

3. How do student teachers rate their teacher education program in preparing them to teach writing?

4. Is there a relationship between the writing apprehension of future teachers and their beliefs about their own role and responsibility in teaching writing?

5. How do prospective secondary teachers describe themselves as writers and future teachers of writing and what are their expressed beliefs regarding the causes and possible solutions for the low writing scores of many secondary students?

6. How and to what extent are writing self-perceptions and the teaching of writing addressed in teacher education programs?

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to students at Middle Tennessee State University preparing to be teachers in elementary and secondary schools and their university instructors. Subjects were not chosen randomly. Therefore, caution should be taken in making generalizations from the results. However, assuming these students represent typical preservice teachers and inasmuch as their teacher education program mirrors others across the nation, conclusions regarding the characteristics of preservice teachers and implications for teacher preparation programs are reasonable.

In addition, as with all questionnaires and a survey type research design, the responses can only represent the presumed honesty of the respondents. Whereas some might conclude that subjective opinions and responses should not be used in research designed to improve classroom practices, others suggest that it is imperative, considering that

teachers' decisions in some respect emanate from their perceptions (Frager, 1994).

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to describe and explore the currently held beliefs and self-perceptions of preservice teachers as they relate to writing and teaching writing and to examine how the identity of the teacher as writer and the teaching of writing is being addressed in teacher education programs. The study used available human resources within the College of Education at Middle Tennessee State University.

Middle Tennessee State University, founded in 1911, is a co-educational, tax-supported institution located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, near Nashville. The total enrollment for the university in the Fall, 1994 was 17,120, making it the third largest institution of higher learning in the state. Of these, 16,033 were classified as Tennessee residents. The College of Education, which supports the largest program offering in the state of Tennessee, serves between 2,500 and 3,000 students per year and recommends to the state approximately 400 students per year for licensure. The student racial make-up for the university and for the College of Education is approximately 87% Caucasion, 10% African American, 2% Asian, and 1% Hispanic. Faculty racial make-up is similar.

I conducted the study in three phases. In the first phase, a group of student teachers responded to a questionnaire designed to measure their perceptions of themselves as writers and future teachers of writing. In the second phase, students enrolled in a content reading course responded in journal form to three topics relating to writing and teaching

writing. In a third phase, a group of teacher educators responded to a questionnaire designed to describe how these issues are addressed in teacher education programs. As a part of the third phase, documents relating to course design and state competencies for teacher education were also reviewed. The methodology of the study is presented here using these three phases as a framework.

Phase One

To provide data pertaining to preservice teachers' level of writing apprehension, beliefs about writing instruction and their roles as writing teachers, and ratings of their teacher education program in preparing them as writers and writing teachers, a questionnaire designed to elicit such information was administered to 226 preservice teachers from MTSU just prior to beginning their student teaching assignments in the Spring semester, 1996. The respondents represented a heterogeneous mix of preservice teachers preparing to teach in either the elementary or secondary school, or both. Table 2.1 contains the percentages of respondents from the various general certification programs.

The instrument used, the Teacher/Writer Questionnaire (TWQ) (see copy in Appendix), is an adapted version of the Writing Apprehension Measure (Daly & Miller, 1975). Permission to use the Writing Apprehension Measure (WAM) for this study was granted by the Educational Testing Service, from whom the instrument was obtained. The WAM was designed to measure general anxiety about encoding written expression through 26 items relating to tendencies to avoid

Table 2.1. Respondents to the Teacher Writer Questionnaire. (n=226)

GENERAL CERTIFICATION AREA	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE
Elementary Education	104	46.0
Secondary Education	63	27.9
Early Childhood	23	10.2
K-12	19	8.4
Special Education	16	7.1

writing, attitudes toward written communication, and feelings experienced during writing. Five separate studies were conducted on the WAM during its development. Initial tests of reliability using a split-half technique produced a coefficient of .940 and using a test-retest method over a week, a .923 coefficient was determined (Daly & Miller, 1975). The WAM also has reported sufficient face and predictive validity (Daly & Miller, 1975) and has been used in prior studies (Claypool, 1980; Daly, 1985).

For the instrument to more fully address the questions proposed by this study, additional items were needed relating specifically to beliefs and attitudes regarding teacher responsibility to write and teach writing. A series of steps, including a pilot testing and a review by other professionals in writing and psychological measurements, were followed in the creation of 13 items which, added to the 26 items of the WAM, make up the Teacher/Writer Questionnaire (TWQ), the instrument used in this study. One final item was added to the TWQ to elicit respondents' ratings of their teacher education program in preparing them as writers and writing teachers, bringing the total number of items to 40.

The TWQ elicits one basic piece of demographic data: prospective

teaching area(s). Given a list of possible areas, respondents are asked to check any and all that apply (i.e., secondary, math). Especially in the case of those working toward certification in more than one field, it is possible that several areas may be identified for a single respondent. Also, an blank space is provided in which a respondent may write any area not listed on the form. Because of this, distinct demographic categories were not fully determined until after the completed questionnaires had been collected and analyzed.

A 5-point Likert-scale (strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, strongly disagree) is used to indicate the extent to which a respondent agrees with or disagrees with each of the 40 statements contained in the TWQ. Twenty-three of the items are worded positively and 17 are worded negatively. Therefore, agreement with a positive statement or disagreement with a negative statement indicates a positive self-perception or less apprehensive stance toward writing or teaching writing. Likewise, disagreement with a positively worded statement or agreement with a negatively worded statement indicates a less positive disposition or more apprehensive stance with regard to writing or teaching writing.

Prior to beginning their off-campus student teaching assignments, preservice teachers met for one full day of on-campus orientation, part of which was spent in a whole group assembly. It was during this part of the day's schedule, during the first week of the Spring semester, 1996, that I administered the questionnaires.

Once all questionnaires had been completed, the results were entered into a computer statistical program for analysis. The initial point value on the items of the TWQ ranged from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5

(Strongly Disagree), with 3 designated as Uncertain. So that the direction of responses would be uniform, item values were recoded so that each item had a range of scores from 1 (least apprehensive or most positive stance) to 5 (most apprehensive or most negative stance). Therefore, if a respondent checked "strongly agree" to a positive statement about writing or teaching writing, that response was assigned a value of 1. If the respondent checked "strongly disagree" with a positive statement, that response was assigned a value of 5. Tests of internal consistency of the TWQ using a Cronbach Alpha produced a reliability coefficient of .94.

Frequency distributions were computed to describe overall trends in responses to each item on the TWQ among the entire sample. Next, all items which were a part of the Writing Apprehension Measure (WAM) were grouped to represent the construct, writing apprehension, and the distribution of the means of those responses, were applied to the scale of writing apprehension used by the authors of the instrument (Daly & Miller, 1975), in which scores falling one standard deviation or more below the mean of the distribution were labeled as being less apprehensive to writing, those within one standard deviation below and above the mean were identified as moderately apprehensive toward writing, and those falling one standard deviation or more above the mean were considered to have a high level of writing apprehension. Then, to address questions of relationship between writing apprehension and beliefs about the responsibility of teachers to teach writing, chi squares were computed using the WAM scores and various items added to the TWQ.

Phase Two

A second phase of this study which was more qualitative in nature was designed to look more deeply into prospective secondary teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers and writing teachers and the factors which may have influenced those perceptions. As a pilot to this study, a group of 33 students enrolled in one of two content reading courses, READ 334 (Teaching Reading in the Secondary School) and READ 446 (Teaching Reading in the Content Areas) were asked to participate in a series of exchanges with the researcher through guided journal entries.

Though similar in content, READ 334 is a secondary school literacy course specifically tailored for prospective English teachers while READ 446 more generally addresses literacy issues in the various other content areas found in the secondary school (i.e., math, history, social studies, biology, chemistry, and foreign language). Students enrolled in these two courses must first be admitted to the Teacher Education Program and are typically nearing the end of their coursework prior to the student teaching field experience.

Students were asked to address each of two topics: their identity as a writer, and their beliefs about what is needed to improve student writing in schools. For the latter, they were given as a stimulus a newspaper article detailing the low scores obtained by Tennessee students during the previous statewide assessment (Benavides, 1994). After reading the article, they were asked to give their impressions of factors contributing to the low scores and suggest possible solutions to the problem. Additionally, 20 of these students were asked to respond to a third journal topic; to describe the types of writing instruction they had

received while in college. These exchanges took place over a period of one semester, beginning in September, 1995, and ending in late November, 1995.

Data obtained from the various exchanges with these prospective teachers were used in the conceptualization of this study. The same procedure was then used with 27 students enrolled in READ 446 during the Spring, 1996, semester. Combined with the data obtained in the pilot, journal responses from 60 students were coded and analyzed for recurring patterns and included in this study.

Phase Three

A third phase of this study looked at beliefs and practices of teacher educators relating to the identity of the teacher as a writer. A teacher educator questionnaire (see copy in Appendix) was distributed through the intra-campus mail system to each of 45 faculty members of the departments of Educational Leadership and Elementary and Special Education. Included was another campus mail envelope for returning to the completed form. Of the 45 distributed, 29 (64%) were completed and returned. Five of the 29 were from teacher educators who worked solely with graduate students and therefore, analysis was limited to 24 questionnaires. Respondents were asked to identify their years' experience and whether they typically instruct prospective elementary or secondary teachers, or both equally. Tables 2.3 and 2.4 show the breakdown according to primary instructional assignment and years of experience of the 24 teacher educators responding.

Table 2.3. Primary instructional assignment of respondents to the Teacher Educator Questionnaire.

PRIMARY INSTRUCTIONAL ASSIGNMENT	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE
Elementary Education	6	25.0
Secondary Education	6	25.0
Special Education	5	20.8
All Levels	7	29.2

Table 2.4. Breakdown according to years of experience in teacher education of those responding to the questionnaire.

YEARS EXPERIENCE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE
0 - 5	4	16.7
6 - 10	5	20.8
11 - 15	1	4.2
16 - 25	7	29.2
26 +	6	25.0
No Response	1	4.2

Questions were designed to inquire into the types of writing experiences being pursued in teacher training, the extent to which teacher educators' beliefs mirror those found in the current paradigm for writing instruction, and where and how the identity of a teacher as writer is being addressed in course content. Analysis of the completed questionnaires involved both the computing of frequency distributions for objective responses and a qualitative synthesis and interpretation of open-ended responses.

Documental evidence, in the form of specific course outlines, was collected and analyzed to support or disconfirm responses obtained on

the teacher educator questionnaire. Specifically, the outlines for any relevant courses offered in the training of teachers at MTSU were analyzed for evidence of specific writing competencies addressed and presentation of topics pertaining to writing or the teaching of writing. In addition, Tennessee State Department of Education Competencies were reviewed to determine how the issues of teacher/writer self-perceptions and writing instruction in the content areas are viewed in the larger context of teacher preparation institutions in the state.

RESULTS

Student Teachers' Apprehension Toward Writing

Table 3.1 shows the percentages of responses and lists the mean score for responses to each of the items on the Teacher-Writer Questionnaire (TWQ). The mean scores listed are the actual means prior to the recoding of the items to show a direction of low (positive stance) to high (negative stance), as described in the previous chapter. Therefore, for statements positively worded, a lower mean indicates a more positive stance toward that statement. Conversely, for statements worded negatively, a lower mean indicates a more negative stance. While some statements do not necessarily conform to an absolute interpretation of negative or positive, the means can serve as a way of interpreting strength and direction of responses.

Very few of those responding (8%, Item 1) indicated that they avoid writing. A number of responses across the instrument appear to reveal

Table 3.1 - Percentages and means of responses to items on the TWQ.

Negatively worded statements are italicized. (n=226)

ITEMS FROM THE TEACHER WRITER QUESTIONNAIRE	SA 1	A 2	U 3	D 4	SD 5	MEAN
1. *I avoid writing.*	1	7	6	54	31	4.07
2. I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.	15	39	15	28	3	2.67
3. I look forward to writing down my ideas.	15	57	16	10	2	2.28
4. *Teachers in my field do not have to be writers.*	0	11	8	42	39	4.06
5. *I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.*	4	23	10	48	15	3.45
6. Teachers should write along with their students.	39	45	13	2	1	1.82
7. Handing in a composition makes me feel good.	12	39	32	15	2	2.56
8. *My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a composition.*	4	18	13	57	9	3.50
9. *Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.*	1	1	4	44	50	4.41
10. *Writing assignments are difficult to grade.*	2	43	30	24	1	2.77
11. I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication.	9	20	26	27	17	3.21
12. I like to write down my ideas.	22	57	10	10	1	2.12
13. I feel confident in critiquing another person's writing.	5	35	29	25	5	2.09
14. Writing should be incorporated in all classes.	42	44	9	4	0	1.77
15. I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in writing.	23	51	15	10	1	2.15
16. I like to have my friends read what I have written.	10	37	26	24	3	2.73
17. *I'm nervous about writing.*	3	18	11	56	12	3.56
18. *Writing is more important in some classes than others.*	15	53	8	23	1	2.45
19. People seem to enjoy what I write.	2	38	54	6	0	2.63

Table 3.1 (Continued)

ITEMS FROM THE TEACHER WRITER QUESTIONNAIRE	SA 1	A 2	U 3	D 4	SD 5	MEAN
20. I do not need instruction in writing.	1	17	21	52	9	3.52
21. I enjoy writing.	19	52	14	13	2	2.27
22. *I never seem to be able to clearly write down my ideas.*	2	13	11	62	13	3.70
23. Writing is a lot of fun.	12	43	27	16	4	2.58
24. All teachers should be writers.	10	42	26	18	4	2.64
25. *I expect to do poorly in composition classes even before I enter them.*	2	6	8	55	29	4.04
26. I like seeing my thoughts on paper.	14	58	22	6	0	2.21
27. I plan to use writing regularly in my classes when I teach.	30	50	15	5	0	1.96
28. Discussing my writing with others is enjoyable.	8	36	33	22	0	2.71
29. *I have a terrible time organizing my ideas when writing.*	1	16	12	60	10	3.60
30. *When I hand in a composition, I know I'm going to do poorly.*	0	4	8	66	20	4.01
31. *Mathematics does not lend itself well to writing.*	3	15	31	45	6	3.37
32. It's easy for me to write good compositions.	5	43	23	27	2	2.77
33. When teaching, I will try to correct all of my students' writing mistakes.	3	30	25	36	5	2.90
34. *I don't think I write as well as most other people.*	3	30	17	43	7	3.21
35. *I don't like my compositions to be evaluated.*	1	29	22	42	6	3.21
36. *Whether or not I write has no bearing on my students' writing.*	0	12	8	51	29	3.96
37. *I'm no good at writing.*	1	6	11	56	26	4.00
38. I want to teach writing.	10	18	21	39	12	2.75
39. *Taking a composition course is a very frightening experience.*	4	9	23	41	21	3.67
40. My teacher education program has trained me well to teach writing.	7	29	29	23	12	3.04

the opposite, that the majority of preservice teachers enjoy some types of writing and are fairly confident in their writing. For example, 72% (Item 2) responded that they look forward to writing down their ideas and an even greater percentage (79%, Item 12) agreed that they like to write down their ideas. Seventy-one percent (Item 21) responded that they enjoy writing and 72% (Item 26) reported that they like to see their thoughts on paper. Only 20% of those responding disagreed with the statement (Item 23) that writing is a lot of fun and as many as 94% agreed that writing is not a waste of time (Item 9).

Several items from the TWQ relate specifically to feelings of self-confidence in writing. Responses to these items show that while only 11% of the respondents reported not feeling confident in their ability to clearly express their ideas (Item 15), 31% disagreed with the statement (Item 2) that they have no fear of their writing being evaluated, and only 18% reported not needing instruction in writing (Item 20). Only 13% (item 39) responded that taking a composition course would be a frightening experience. When handing in a composition, only 4% expect to do poorly (Item 30), yet 30% responded that they don't like a composition to be evaluated (Item 35) and only 51% reported that handing in a composition makes them feel good (Item 7). Additionally, only 7% agreed with the statement that they are no good at writing (Item 37), yet 33% believe that they don't write as well as most other people (Item 34). Forty-four percent did not favor the notion of submitting their writing for evaluation and publication (Item 11).

The two items receiving the highest percentage of responses of "Uncertain" pertain to external evaluation and appreciation for one's writing. Results revealed that although 40% agreed with the statement

that others enjoy what they write (Item 19), 54% were uncertain. Also, 33% were uncertain whether or not discussing writing with others is enjoyable (Item 28).

Student Teachers' Apprehension Toward Teaching Writing and Their Perceptions About the Role of the Classroom Teacher in Student Writing

Several items on the TWQ are designed to measure beliefs regarding the teacher's role in writing, both generally and personally. Regarding beliefs about the teacher's role in general, results show that 52% believed all teachers should be writers (Item 24), and an overwhelming 84% agreed that teachers should write with their students (Item 6). Inversely, only 11% of those responding agreed with the statement that teachers in their field do not have to be writers (Item 4), and only 12% did not believe their writing has any bearing on their students writing. On a more personal level, although 80% indicated that they planned to use writing in their classroom (Item 27), only 28% indicated that they want to teach writing (Item 38).

Results of responses to items on the TWQ relating to beliefs about writing across the curriculum revealed that while 86% believed writing should be incorporated in all classes (Item 14), 68% agreed that writing is more important in some classes than others (Item 18). Eighteen percent contend that math does not lend itself well to writing (Item 31).

Additional items on the TWQ are intended to describe respondents feelings and beliefs about the teacher's role of evaluating the writing of others. Results from this study show that only 40% felt confident in critiquing another's writing (Item 13) and a mere 25% disagreed with the

statement that writing assignments are difficult to grade (Item 10). Additionally, this last statement regarding the difficulty of grading writing assignments received the second most high adjusted mean (3.23) of all items on the TWQ. Thirty-three percent indicated that they will try to correct all of their students' writing mistakes, while 41% will not.

Preservice Teachers' Evaluation of Their Teacher Education Program in Preparing Them To Teach Writing

On the one item added to the TWQ to assess the respondents' feelings about their teacher education program in training them how to teach writing (Item 40), 36% indicated that they have been trained well, 35% that they have not, and 29% that they are uncertain. The mean score for the statement relating to the respondents' teacher education program effectively training them to teach writing (Item 39) was 3.04.

The Relationship Between the Writing Apprehension of Future Teachers and Their Beliefs About Their own Role and Responsibility in Teaching Writing

As stated previously, to study the relationship between writing apprehension and beliefs about the teacher's role and responsibility in teaching writing, a scale of writing apprehension was computed using the 26 items from the TWQ which are contained in the Writing Apprehension Measure (Daly & Miller, 1975). Based on a mean score of 62.46 and a standard deviation of 15.38 from recoded responses to items from the WAM on the TWQ, a scale of writing apprehension was developed where

those scoring more than one standard deviation above the mean (14.3%) were considered to be highly apprehensive. Those within one standard deviation below or above the mean (70%) were considered moderately apprehensive, and those scoring more than one standard deviation below the mean (15.7%) were seen as low apprehensive. This method is supported in the literature on the Writing Apprehension Measure (Daly & Miller, 1985).

Chi-squares were computed to examine the relationship between respondents' degree of writing apprehension and reported beliefs about teaching writing. To reduce the number of cells with an expected frequency less than 5, and also to provide for each of the 13 additional statements of beliefs about teaching writing, a scale comparable to the one used for writing apprehension, the values of Strongly Disagree and Disagree were collapsed into one category of Disagree. Likewise, the Strongly Agree and Agree values were collapsed into one category, Agree. This resulted in a series of three by three crosstables comparing responses to the 13 items with the three levels of writing apprehension.

Of the 13 chi-squares computed, five produced correlation coefficients large enough to be significant. Those respondents classified as having a low level of writing apprehension were much more likely to indicate confidence in critiquing another person's writing (Pearson Chi-Square Value=43.476/ $p.<.00001$), express a desire to teach writing (Pearson Chi-Square Value=35.741/ $p.<.00001$) and believe that teachers must be writers (Pearson Chi-Square Value=20.707/ $p.<.001$).

Writing apprehension was also found to be significantly related to respondents' beliefs about their own need for more instruction in writing (Pearson Chi-Square Value=20.623/ $p.<.001$). Whereas 37.1% of low

apprehensives agreed with the statement (Item 20) that they did not need instruction in writing, not a single highly apprehensive respondent did likewise. Finally, respondents who were classified as being highly apprehensive were more likely to feel that writing assignments are difficult to grade (Pearson Chi-Square Value=13.321/ $p.<.01$).

Prospective Secondary Teachers' Descriptions of Themselves as Writers

In the second phase of this study, 60 preservice secondary teachers enrolled in one of two content reading courses responded in journal form to three questions or topics. As an initial entry, these students were asked to describe themselves as writers. Some of those participating expressed a lack of confidence in writing. While some made general comments such as, "I would never use the term 'writer' to describe myself;" "I am not a confident writer;" and "I do not write that well," others were more specific as to why they lack confidence, such as one who wrote, "I hate for people to read my work due to the weakness in structure," and another who complained, "I have a degree in chemistry and a minor in math, and I can't pass the writing section of the PPST (Pre-Professional Skills Test)." One student attributed his dislike for writing to never being good at it, further stating that when he tries to write, "it never seems to come out the way I want it to or think it should."

On the other hand, there were also some entries which revealed a substantial degree of self-confidence and fearlessness in writing. One student wrote, "I am usually able to convey my message to my reader," and another reported, "I am relaxed and at ease when I attempt a writing assignment." A prospective English teacher who has written several

short stories related, "The desire to write stays, lingers, churns in my soul until I have little choice but to sit down and let the words out." Two students expressed a belief that their own expectations for writing are greater than those of their teachers, and one student declared, "I surprise myself with some of my work."

Students described both positive and negative experiences with writing growing up. Two recalled the pleasure of their teen age years of writing their thoughts down when coming home from a night out. A prospective foreign language teacher wrote about how, as a young girl, she would compose stories about heroes of Arthurian legends. This same student attributed working through many difficult situations by identifying with an alter-ego in her own writing. One student recalled a single incident in high school where he wrote his first poem about a friend who had been killed in a car wreck. His teacher found the poem and, thinking it good, brought it to the attention of the class. This student reported that he continues to write poems today. A non-traditional student, a prospective history teacher in his mid-forties, wrote that "growing up on a farm in the 1950s probably dictated that I learn to read, and consequently pick up attitudes of writing." This student went on to work as a correspondent and instructor for the military, to which he attributed many "eclectic experiences" in writing. Of the people who are remembered as positive influences, the most common are teachers. One student wrote about a friend who made supportive comments after reading her work. Another specifically attributed her change in attitude toward writing and writing skill to a developmental writing class in college. Parents, who are also teachers, were also cited as positive influences by a couple of students. One student reported currently

working with a group called the Amateur Press Alliance, which has helped him develop his writing skills.

As stated, teachers were cited as positive influences by some respondents. However, a number of respondents wrote of teachers as negative influences in their writing. One student wrote, "Many times I have written papers or reactions I felt were enlightening or innovative and the teacher bashed them." Another echoed this feeling of rejection when she wrote, "The one time I thought I had written a good paper and enjoyed writing it, I was told to rewrite it because it was horrible." School writing was reduced by one respondent to "handing a paper to a Ph.D. to be examined with a magnifying glass." Perhaps the most graphic comment came from a prospective English teacher who wrote, "Last year I took a Shakespeare class. We wrote essays and abstracts. The teacher handed me back bleeding, hemorrhaging papers. He said I'm a C writer, nothing more. I dropped the class. I lost more than dollars on that class. I lost my self-esteem."

Several students described themselves as lacking creative writing skills or the desire to write creatively. However, "school writing" is the type of writing (based on context more than genre) which received the most negative comments. One student who reported that research papers make her "uptight" went on to say that when she is relaxed and writing for herself, she is more creative but "naturally less attentive to rules." Another student wrote, "The anxiety that some people feel about writing is only present when it becomes an assignment." She went on to say, "My biggest fear is that it won't be long enough." Another lamented, "I tend to write for an audience of one- the professor."

Many of those responding appeared to equate writing with the following of rules and conventions, and attributed their poor self-concept as writers and poor attitudes toward writing to their own weaknesses in these conventions. One student said very bluntly, "Writing is a task, not something done for the pleasure of it. It is a task that takes a great deal of concentration and following of rules." A prospective English teacher reflected, " I am constantly afraid of making stupid mistakes and looking foolish." Another student wrote that she is "totally deficient in grammar" and went on to state that when she writes papers at school, she receives "an A+ for content and a negative grade for grammar." A student who very openly said he is "afraid of writing" and "hate(s) to do it" attributed his feelings to the fact that he has problems with spelling and grammar. While these responses reflected an emphasis on the writing product, others expressed a more process-oriented view. One student wrote, "I am not a great writer now, but I enjoy working on my form as a writer and improving myself with every paper." Others spoke of the revising process, building their vocabulary through writing, and writing for various audiences. A prospective English teacher wrote, "I view writing as a process. I view it as a compulsion to express and explore. Every time I write, I know I'm becoming a better writer."

The desire for extrinsic approval, or the fear of failure, through the form of a grade is at the heart of several of the responses submitted. One student wrote that if she knows a paper is worth "50% of the grade," then she has "incentive to write." Perhaps a prospective English teacher spoke for many when she wrote, "I do papers and pray that I pass." A future math teacher reported that he enjoys writing letters regularly to friends because "they are not graded."

Still, a large number of responses revealed the connection many students have made between their interests, their desire for having choices and their writing. A student who reported that she hates "writing about literature," goes on to say, "I only like writing when I care about the topic being written about." Another commented that "personal interest is the key to doing well and writing from the heart."

While one future math teacher reported that he has not been required to write a lot in college and another exclaimed, "Us math people like numbers, not grammar," other math majors and students across the various content areas pointed out the value of having writing skills. A couple of students related that they feel more confident expressing themselves in writing than verbally, and another student reported that writing is for her a "calming activity." Another attributed a stronger self-concept to winning a writing contest. About winning, she wrote, "It's one of the few times in my life I can remember feeling like I've accomplished something." Several other respondents stressed how writing has helped them in school; in making better grades, in studying for tests, and in organizing their thoughts.

A third journal assignment given to 20 of the 60 prospective secondary teachers participating in this study was to describe their college writing experiences, both positive and negative. Two students responding commended college teachers who had them submit drafts of their work, and then returned them with written feedback for revisions prior to final submission for a grade. A prospective foreign language teacher reported how a German instructor had allowed her to write her paper on his office computer. He would periodically read her work and make comments in brackets on her paper. In relating an experience from

another college of education in the state of Tennessee, one student wrote of a professor who held sessions on writing outside of class, of which attendance was not mandatory, to accompany writing assignments that were a part of the class. However, very few of the students showed up for these sessions. Still another reported how another teacher education institution required students not maintaining a 2.5 G.P.A. in freshmen and sophomore English classes to enroll in a writing lab and pass an English qualifying exam.

Other positive comments included a prospective history teacher who wrote that "professors have always been willing to help in the history and education department" and another student returning to college after many years who remarked, "College has become a lot more challenging; instructors actually expect me to research and write now." A prospective foreign language teacher wrote, "One teacher in particular stands out to me because she gave us a step by step process with the essay being the final and hopefully perfected step."

A few entries were more negative in relation to college teachers' assistance with and participation in the writing process of their students. A future chemistry teacher complained, "Here at MTSU, I have no class where these things are taught. Most classes assume that we already possess the knowledge. It is, in fact, left to the student to sink or swim." Another wrote, "Most of the professors have only assigned the work." Still another reported, "The only time that the professor has helped us in the writing aspect was in my education classes. In all of the other classes, including English, there was little or no guidance given unless I went to the teacher and asked."

A few respondents wrote of specific writing experiences in college. In describing an experience in completing a portfolio at another Tennessee college, one prospective biology teacher exclaimed, "It was the neatest thing I'd ever seen! It helped me see my writing process." Another student praised having to write journals because it helped her "learn about my own personal beliefs and feelings." Finally, a student who already had acquired a degree in communications and returned to school for licensure in Speech and Theater wrote, "It wasn't until I started my teacher certification that I engaged in reflective writing as a part of my classes."

Beliefs Regarding the Causes and Possible Solutions for the Low Writing Scores of Many Secondary Students

Another journal assignment given to the prospective secondary teachers participating in this study had as a stimulus a newspaper article detailing the low scores by Tennessee students on the first state-wide mandated writing assessment. These prospective teachers were asked to give their opinions as to why students scored so poorly. Table 3.2 shows the percentages of respondents that made particular attributions. The most common reason for low scores, given by 57% of those responding, is that students are not given enough time in school to practice writing. The comment written most often was, "Practice makes perfect." This was expressed literally a number of times, as well as through the relating of both negative and positive experiences. While one student who considers himself a poor writer said that "the lack of written work in high school definitely affected me in college," another who

expressed a high degree of confidence as a writer related the opposite, that "whether it was writing narratives in English, newspaper articles in history, or writing our own word problems in math, we spent a lot of time writing." The lack of time spent practicing writing was also the primary reason implied in the article reviewed for the journal entry (Benavides, 1994).

Most of those responding went beyond simply attributing the problem to a lack of practice, however, by offering suggestions on the types of writing experiences needed to produce better writers. A number of these focused on the need for more student choice in school writing. One student wrote, "What students write should probably begin with something they enjoy doing." Another contended, "Students need to feel

Table 3.2 - Suggested reasons from journal entries of preservice teachers for the low writing scores of Tennessee students.

SUGGESTED REASONS OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS FOR THE LOW WRITING SCORES OF TENNESSEE STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF SAMPLE
Students are not given enough time to practice writing in school.	57
Students are not motivated to write.	45
Students are not taught how to write in school.	30
Writing essays is not a regular feature of tests.	25
Writing is not encouraged in all content areas.	20
Students do not read enough.	15
Teachers don't have the time or desire to grade papers.	12
There is a basic conflict between what is taught and what is tested.	10
Television and video games have a negative influence on writing.	8
Students are not encouraged at home to write.	8

more connected to their writing. The larger problem lies in making students believe that writing is a valuable experience."

A common belief woven throughout the journal entries is that writing needs to become more relevant for and meaningful to students. Specifically, 45%, or 27 of the 60 students responding to this assignment, made some mention of students lacking the motivation or the desire to write. Two respondents argued that students get "turned off" to writing because it is used as punishment. Others attributed poor motivation to receiving no feedback from teachers on their writing, as well as to receiving negative feedback and bad grades for their writing. In offering a solution, one respondent wrote, "Teachers are going to have to find a non-threatening approach to writing. Writing must become a habit, not a once a year drudgery. Kids have got to be motivated to write!"

The third most common reason given for these low writing scores was that students are not being taught how to write in school. One student, noting the difference between teaching students' writing and simply providing students with time to practice writing said, "Students may be required to write reports and other things for assignments, but if they are not taught how to improve what they have written, they will not make sufficient progress." Another complained, "I was never taught writing skills in high school and I graduated with honors. Then in college, I had to take a developmental writing class." One student expressed concern about "inservice teachers with 15 to 20 years experience not being willing to change." He further commented that, "not only should (teachers) be taught how to (use writing), they should also be monitored to make sure it's being done."

Some students offered suggestions on how writing should be taught. Most of these stressed the importance of emphasizing the process of writing. One wrote, "Right now, my idea is to take off the pressure, give them a sure fire model, make it fun and relate it to life." While some expressed that teachers focus too much on the rules and conventions of writing, still others proposed that they be given more emphasis. This is, perhaps, the area that received the most diversity of opinions from respondents. One student even stated strongly that teachers need to focus less on prewriting. This comment was, however, the exception to the more commonly expressed opinion that more attention needs to be given to the process of writing.

Twenty-five percent of those responding attributed low writing scores on the state-wide tests to the lack of writing featured on tests in general. One student wrote, "Everything is rush, rush, rush. Every answer is short and to the point." In some of these responses, teachers were blamed, because as one says, "(teachers) do not want to grade papers." Another student, seeing the inclusion on state-wide tests as possibly benefiting students, wrote, "We teach things that are on the test. Probably now that writing is on the test, more teachers will teach writing."

The need for writing across the curriculum was noted by 20% of those responding. One student wrote, "I think writing has to be infused into all portions of the curriculum, including math and science from kindergarten through graduate school." Another stated, "I think teachers of subjects other than English need to get over the phobia of the written word and start incorporating writing, even if informal, into their classroom."

Several students recognized the connection of writing to reading and attributed the low writing scores to poor reading skills or the little amount of reading done by students. One particular student who served as a military instructor in the past described two things which he believes helped his students to improve their writing: reading two books a month and receiving a great deal of feedback on their writing. He concluded, "Good readers are able to recognize good writing." Another respondent reported that in France, reading and writing are integrated and students perform better in both.

Other reasons given for the low writing scores of students from Tennessee schools include the basic conflict between what is being taught and what is being tested, the negative influence of television and video games, and the lack of encouragement students receive at home. Only one student mentioned specifically the connection between students' writing and teachers' writing when, in addressing the problem of low writing scores by students, she hypothesized, "It's probably because the teachers themselves are not good writers."

How Teacher Education Programs Address Writing Self-Perceptions and the Teaching of Writing

Teacher Educator Questionnaire

In the third phase of the study, 24 teacher educators specializing in either the elementary or secondary grades, or both, were asked to respond to a series of questions about the types of writing required in their courses and to what extent, if any, writing is taught or writing apprehension is addressed in those courses. Results of responses to the

question regarding the kinds of writing required in teacher education courses indicate that the type of writing used by most faculty is essays on tests (83.3%). The next type of writing required most often in teacher education courses taught by those responding is instructional plans (66.7). Reviews of literature were assigned by 58.3% of those responding, while half (50%) required a research paper. The type of writing used by the least amount of teacher educators (41.7%) was journals.

Those questioned were also given the opportunity to describe other, more specific types of writing used in their courses. Two teacher educators reported that they assign group reports and three identified reaction papers as being required in their courses. One respondent teaching courses in special education required students to write diagnostic reports and I.E.P.'s, and an elementary education instructor reported having students complete case studies of individual children. One faculty member wrote of utilizing exit slips, literature logs, and e-mail.

Next, respondents were provided a space for describing the types of feedback students receive from them for the above mentioned course-related writing. Many of those responding mentioned reported writing editorial comments on students' papers, with some adding that they note and correct grammatical errors. However, only about half of those reported including grammar and spelling in the determination of a grade for the writing. Several mentioned making attempts, both verbally and in writing, to praise and encourage students in their writing. While 5 of the 24 responding indicated that individual conferences are utilized, 3 of these 5 reserve this type of feedback for students with special problems or those who request it. Only 1 of the 24 teacher educators surveyed

made mention of working with students throughout the process of writing, providing them with comments and specific suggestions prior to the submission of a final draft.

Teacher educators were also asked to what extent their courses addressed student apprehension toward writing. Most (37.5%) responded that writing apprehension is addressed only incidentally, while 33.3% reported directly addressing the issue. Twenty-six percent indicated not addressing writing apprehension at all. One teacher educator did not respond to the question. One respondent who indicated a direct approach to addressing writing apprehension wrote, "We work through it as a process to try to relieve the apprehension. Students invariably feel they have nothing to say of any importance, and they are more afraid of what they do not feel comfortable editing, such as comma usage, paragraphs, etc." Another wrote that because "many freshmen are unprepared and apprehensive, I attempt to give clear, specific directions orally and in writing." Referring to the benefits of modeling to reduce apprehension, a respondent who works primarily with preservice secondary teachers described showing "samples of correctly done writing" and trying to "clearly guide the writing processes." Similarly, 2 of those responding that writing apprehension was addressed incidentally in their courses said they are more direct when "it is necessary and related to an assignment" or when they "need to speak to an individual." Others felt they addressed the problem "in the discussion of comps" and "through the rewarding of effort." Another wrote, "While my students write quite a bit, I don't often get the feeling that they are apprehensive. Maybe it is because they know they'll get a second

chance." At least one respondent believed that "apprehension is not the concern, but rather skill and technique."

Next, teacher educators were asked whether it is a goal of their instruction to train preservice teachers how to teach writing. Nearly three-fourths responded "no" to the question. A few expressed directly that it was someone else's responsibility to train writing teachers with comments like, "English is not my content area" and "I'm not preparing English teachers," or the question, "Isn't that the responsibility of the methods courses and the English department?" Still others said simply that it was "not included in the outline for my class" and that it was a "goal in courses other than the ones I teach." Three of those responding "no" to the question attributed the absence of this instructional goal to lack of time.

Twenty-five percent of those surveyed said that, to some extent, they do consider training writing teachers to be a goal of their instruction. However, analysis of their comments revealed some similarities in practice and approach to those answering "no" to the question. One teacher educator wrote, "My approach is not deliberate, but rather to give the aspiring teacher a good example." Likewise, another wrote that the goal was achieved "to a limited extent by demonstrating good writing skills." This respondent went on to say, "I wish to help train our preservice teachers to indirectly teach their students to write effectively by using good writing skills themselves." Only 1 teacher educator (4.2%) indicated that the goal of training preservice teachers to be teachers of writing was a primary goal of instruction in their courses. This is accomplished, according to this

respondent, "by taking the students through each phase of the writing process."

How does this group of teacher educators rate the writing ability of their students? Not a single respondent rated student writing as excellent. The majority (70.8%) considered student writing to be satisfactory. However, the satisfactory rating could be misleading as indicated by one who wrote that "students range from poor to excellent. The resultant average would then be satisfactory." Others, making comments such as "some write exceptionally well, some very poorly" and "there are extremes at both ends" seem to be thinking along the same line. A few responded that the differences in writing ability seem to be associated with the students' class ranks, with upper classmen having better skills than lower classmen. Those describing student writing as poor (29.2%) pointed to spelling and the inability to "present a convincing position" as being major weaknesses. One teacher educator wrote, "Far too many students have not developed basic writing skills; evidence of poor spelling and grammar is ever present and the ability to provide a critical response to a written work is missing from the skills of most of my students." Another who rated students' writing as poor exclaimed, "Somewhere, we have to address this problem!"

Teacher-educators were also asked to describe what they believed to be the attitude toward writing of students in their classes. A small number of those surveyed (12.5%) rated student attitudes toward writing as being positive. One of those, referring to students' attitude toward writing on tests, wrote, "I use open-ended testing. Students who are not satisfied with their grade are allowed to try again." Another who rated attitudes as positive commented, "If I demonstrate the positive aspects of

writing and a positive attitude, it colors their perceptions." The most common rating of student attitude toward writing was "neutral," given by 58.3% of those teacher educators surveyed. One wrote, "The students usually do not put much emphasis on writing. They do not refuse to do it but they do not act enthusiastic about it either." Others pointed toward the time demand and the length of assignments as the two factors which make students "grumble." Twenty-five percent of those responding reported student attitudes toward writing as being negative. One wrote, "Most of my students seem very apprehensive and self-conscious about writing." Another said, "A lot view it (writing) as almost primitive." Others attributed the negative attitude to particular writing tasks. One of these commented, "Many use the journals well--really groan about the rest." Another wrote that "undergraduate students fear essay questions on tests." This latter sentiment was echoed by another respondent who remarked, "Many students have little experience with essay type tests and can only handle multiple-choice/true-false type questions." One teacher educator did not respond to this question.

Finally, teacher educators were given an open opportunity to express any additional comments they would like concerning student writing or their approach to teach writing. Several seemed to have the desire, but lacked the know-how, to help students with their writing. One wrote, "It is a quandary to me how to address this in a content course in any meaningful way." Another appealed, "I need help! Maybe a staff development session devoted to this topic." Time seems to be an issue with a few of those who expressed a desire to make a difference. One wrote, "I would like to help students with their writing skills, however, it is very difficult fitting in the time that would be needed."

Another remarked, "I wish it was more a labor of love and less of a labor!" Others expressed frustration over students' experience with writing prior to reaching the college level, claiming that they are "often negative" and "all they have been taught about writing is grammar and mechanics."

The majority of comments given reflect the philosophies of those responding. One instructor of entry level foundations of education classes professed, "I believe every teacher ought to be a reading/writing teacher, since these skills are required of effective classroom teachers." Others concurred that "all university classes should require writing" and that students "learn to write by writing- or lots of practice." Seeming to comment on students' inability to monitor their own writing ability, one teacher educator wrote, "It is not surprising that so many have difficulty on the communications section of the PPST (Pre-Professional Skills Test). They don't seem to understand though."

State Competencies for Teacher Education

Also, as a part of the final phase of this study, documental evidence in the form of preservice teacher competencies or standards established by the State of Tennessee for each of the general teacher preparation programs were reviewed (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). These competencies guide the design of the teacher preparation courses and also serve as a criterion measurement by which teacher education courses are reviewed and approved by the State of Tennessee. State competencies were reviewed for teacher preparation in each of the following areas: General Education; Professional Education; Elementary Education 1-8 and K-8; Special Education; K-12 endorsements in the visual arts, health, music education, and physical

education; and secondary (7-12) endorsements in the teaching of the content areas of English, foreign language, mathematics, science, the social studies, and speech communications.

In the general education competencies, two under the heading of "Communication" directly relate to writing, and under the headings of "Social Science and Culture," "Science and Technology," and "Mathematical Concepts and Applications," the ability to write is implied once in each category (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). According to General Education competencies *II-A* and *II-B*, teacher candidates should demonstrate the ability to send and receive written messages in standard English, have the ability to communicate non-verbally, and have the ability to identify and communicate effectively with an audience when writing (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). More implicitly stated in General Education competencies *IV-A*, *V-A*, and *VI-A*, a preservice teacher should learn to understand how various professionals "create, describe, disseminate, and refine new knowledge within their disciplines" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). In the standards for Professional Education, competency *I-A* states that teacher candidates should have the "ability to demonstrate consistently the communication skills of reading, writing, speaking, listening, and interpreting" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). Both the standards for general education and professional education apply to all areas of teacher licensure.

Within the specialized teacher preparation programs reviewed, the three which address writing to the greatest degree are elementary education K-8 and 1-8, and the secondary endorsement areas for English and foreign language. In elementary education, the competencies for

language arts instruction and reading contain three relating to different aspects of writing and writing instruction. First, standard *III-B* relates to the teacher as a writer in that they have the "ability to identify and apply skills that contribute to the development of effective ...writing..." (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). That standard is followed by *III-C* which requires that elementary teacher candidates possess the "ability to assist students to develop effective written communication, emphasizing the writing process, language mechanics, appropriate grammar, and legible handwriting" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). Finally, in the standards for reading, the understanding of the connection between reading and writing is addressed in competency *IV-B* (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). No writing competencies are addressed in the standards for licensure in elementary mathematics, science, social studies, health and safety, physical education, or arts education. In foreign language, however, the elementary candidate should be able to write the language "with clarity and precision at a level equivalent to that required of secondary teachers" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994).

As stated above, the areas outside of elementary education which address writing or teaching writing to the greatest degree are the secondary endorsements of English and foreign language. As with the elementary education standards, the English competencies address the teacher as a writer and a teacher of writing. Competency *F* states that English teachers at the secondary level must have the "ability to write for different audiences, purposes, and points of view and the ability to teach these skills" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). Following is standard *G* which states that prospective English teachers should be able

to "teach the process of writing and to modify writing tasks according to instructional levels of students" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). Finally, standard *J* refers to the "ability to demonstrate and encourage legible handwriting" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). In addition to the standards for secondary endorsement in English, foreign language teacher candidates have three competencies addressed in *D-1*, *D-2*, and *D-3* which relate to their ability to write correspondence, moderately difficult prose, summaries, resumes, narratives and factual descriptions in the target language (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). Contained in the standards for licensure of secondary mathematics teachers are I-O, the "ability to communicate mathematics, both orally and in writing," and standard IV-C, the "understanding of the relationship of mathematics to other disciplines" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). Writing is not addressed in any other secondary endorsement area, nor is it a part of the competencies for licensure in the K-12 endorsements in visual arts, health, music education, and physical education.

The final area in which teacher competencies were reviewed was in special education. In the special education core under section III which concerns assessment, evaluation, and planning, the teacher as a professional writer is addressed in III-B, the "ability to interpret and report assessment information...in writing to students, parents, teachers, and appropriate others," and in standard III-D, which states that special education teachers must be able to "write and sequence annual goals and short-term goals that are ambitious and realistic..." (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). Then in the less general area of special education for Modified Program K-12, standard II-E states that

candidates are expected to have the "knowledge of and ability to teach language arts ... at a level comparable to that required of teachers of elementary education using a variety of adaptive instructional methods" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). The same competency is addressed in the area for special education, Vision Pre-K-12, standard III-L. Additionally, teachers working with the visually impaired or blind child, as stated in standards III-A and III-B for that area of specialization, should possess the knowledge of specialized curricula for handwriting with the visually impaired and blind student and the ability to write the Braille code (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). Also, as stated in standard II-K, these teacher candidates must be able to teach the communication skills of writing to the student who is visually impaired or blind (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994). Finally, the standards for teacher licensure in special education, Hearing PreK-12, include competency III-G which states that those certifying to teach hearing impaired or deaf children have the "knowledge and ability to teach language arts ... at a level comparable to that required of teachers of elementary education, using a variety of adaptive instructional methods" (Tennessee State Board of Education, 1994).

Course Outlines

After the state competencies for teacher preparation were reviewed, 25 outlines for courses required in the training of future teachers at MTSU were analyzed for inclusion of writing and teaching writing as specific competencies addressed or as topics for discussion. These 25 courses comprise the education courses for each of the certification areas mentioned above, but do not include courses offered outside of the

College of Education. Ten of these courses specifically catered to elementary education majors. Of these 10, the language arts methods course appears to be the only one in which writing is significantly addressed. This course includes a specific preservice teacher competency pertaining to assisting "children in developing effective written and oral communication." According to the course outline, *writing, the writing process*, and *tools for writing* are specific topics addressed. The language arts methods course also provides students with practice in cursive and manuscript handwriting and analysis of spelling development.

Whereas other courses require written assignments such as case studies and instructional plans, writing is not addressed in any of them as a specific competency or goal. In some cases, it even appears to be omitted where inclusion would be most logical. For instance, a course entitled "Effective Instruction" has as a specific competency that preservice teachers would know how to provide opportunities for helping students think and solve problems, but using writing to achieve that end is not mentioned as a course topic. Also, in a math methods course, the closest thing to writing being addressed in course content relates to the study of word problems. Even in the reading methods course, teaching writing is not addressed as a topic or discussion or a specific competency. It should be mentioned that one section of each of these language arts methods, math methods, and reading methods courses meet as a block and are team-taught by three instructors. The remaining sections meet separately and are taught by single instructors specializing in one of the areas of math, reading, or language arts.

Two of the course outlines reviewed are for those taken by all students preparing to teach and not for a particular specialty area. These foundation courses both address as a general skill and competency the "ability to demonstrate consistently skills of reading, writing, listening and interpreting." However, in the sections of the outlines listing the topics to be covered, writing is never mentioned. The introductory foundations course also lists as a specific competency that students "demonstrate awareness of characteristics generally associated with successful teaching and make a personal assessment of their own qualifications as a prospective teacher." Again, however, there is no indication in the outline that the identity of the teacher as a writer is one of those characteristics that is addressed.

Five course outlines reviewed are for courses designed particularly for those certifying in one of the secondary content areas. According to the outline for one course, "Analysis of Effective Teaching," students are required to write reports and reflective papers. Two other courses, in classroom management and teaching technology, have a similar requirement. A fourth course for secondary teacher candidates, "Methods and Strategies for Teaching," requires students to write lessons and a unit in their respective content majors. However, even though writing is used as a part of the activities requirements of students in the above courses, none of the four courses for secondary content area teachers lists writing or teaching writing as a specific competency to be addressed, and only one, the class in teaching methods, lists writing as a topic under the heading of grading procedures.

The one course for preservice secondary content area teachers that deals specifically with writing is the content area reading course from

which subjects were drawn for the second phase of this study. As described in Chapter II, READ 334 (Teaching Reading in the Secondary School) is a secondary school literacy course specifically tailored for prospective English teachers while READ 446 (Teaching Reading in the Content Areas) more generally addresses literacy issues in the various other content areas found in the secondary school (i.e., math, history, social studies, biology, chemistry, and foreign language). Specific competencies addressed in these two courses include the students demonstrated understanding of various ways of integrating literacy skills and strategies with teaching subject matter, the integration of the processes of reading and writing in the content areas, and strategies for encouraging a lifelong love for writing. Among the topics to be covered are the relationship between reading and writing, techniques of integrating reading and writing, the process approach to writing, and specific types of writing such as journals, essays and research reports.

The remaining 8 course outlines are for instruction in the training of special education teachers. Special competencies addressed in one course, "Techniques, Methods and Materials in Special Education: Mildly Disabled," include the abilities to write an Individual Evaluation Program (I.E.P.), to write a cooperative lesson, to write goals and objectives, and to identify lessons to teach writing. Handwriting is also addressed as a topic for discussion. Many assignments in this and the other special education courses require writing things such as descriptions of programs, observations, and practicum logs. However, writing or teaching writing are not addressed as course topics or as specific competencies in any of the outlines.

DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was two-fold; to describe and explore the currently held beliefs and self-perceptions of preservice teachers as they relate to writing and teaching writing, and to examine how the identity of the teacher as a writer and the teacher of writing is being addressed in teacher education. The insights into future teachers' perceptions of themselves as writers and writing teachers that emerge from this inquiry are multiple. Many support findings from previous research. Still others shed new light on the issues. Whereas all of the many writer traits, attitudes, and experiences described in this study are of interest to the teacher educator intent on developing writers and teachers of writing, a few patterns and themes stand out as having important implications for teacher education.

Here, the major findings of this study, addressed through the integration of data obtained from various sources used in the study, will be presented in light of findings from previous research and their implications for teacher education. Finally, recommendations for the improvement of teacher education programs in addressing these issues will be offered. The discussion will be framed by the three areas of interest on which the goals for this study and the ensuing research questions are based: (a) preservice teachers' attitudes and apprehension toward writing, (b) preservice teachers' attitudes and apprehension toward teaching writing, and (c) how writing and the teaching of writing are addressed in teacher education programs.

Preservice Teachers' Attitudes and Apprehension Toward Writing

Though studies of the writing apprehension of preservice teachers are few, results from this test of writing apprehension indicate that these preservice teachers may be less apprehensive and enjoy writing more than what might be expected. For example, Brinkley (1993) estimates that apprehensive writers in her writing course for elementary teachers at Western Michigan University outnumber non-apprehensive writers as much as 3 to 1. Other studies (Gambell, 1991; Hodges & Bevington-Nash, 1982) report similar proportions of apprehensive to non-apprehensive writers. In the present study, the reverse would be appear to be true, with over 2/3 of the preservice teachers responding that they enjoy writing and only 8% reporting that they avoid writing. The mean score of 62.46 for responses to items on the WAM in this study was considerably lower than the mean of 79.28 found by Daly (1986) in a study of undergraduate composition students at West Virginia University, yet higher than the mean of 45.82 found by Claypool (1980) in a study of experienced high school teachers. A lower mean for the WAM indicates a less apprehensive stance toward writing.

As evidenced in this study, future teachers' attitudes about writing and the extent to which preservice teachers are apprehensive toward writing done in school are influenced greatly by the nature of the writing task, including the purpose for writing, and whether or not the writing is being evaluated. In addition, even though a large percentage of the preservice teachers participating in this study expressed confidence in their writing ability, an equally large percentage saw the need for further instruction in writing.

Influence of the Nature of the Writing Task on Attitude Toward Writing

Reasons given by preservice teachers participating in this study for enjoying writing are in line with previous findings of research in writing and the beliefs of most writing professionals. In a study of undergraduates, ranging from basic writers to honors students, Sutton (1992) found that having a choice in selecting a topic increased student motivation to write. According to many writing professionals (Graves, 1996; Polin, 1993; Rinehammer, 1992; Walsh, 1992, Weinberg, 1993), this desire for ownership and personal voice is at the center of motivation to write. The same theme was continuously expressed by students participating in this study. Just as Raisman (1984) found in a study of the writing preferences of 150 college freshmen, writing experiences which are varied with regard to form, purpose and audience also appeal to students participating in this study. Additionally, the fact that future teachers, as evidenced here, prefer writing assignments in which they do not have to be so attentive to the "rules" is well documented (Buley-Meissner, 1989; Davis, 1987; Frager, 1994; Hollandsworth, 1988).

From the high percentage of agreement (97%) with the statement on the WAM that writing is not a waste of time, as well as the number of journal responses relating the worth of writing in the lives of individual students, it is apparent that a large number of these future teachers appreciate and value writing, and for a variety of reasons. Just as Hoover (1993) found in a study of the writing effects on student teachers, these preservice teachers recognize writing as a valuable tool for learning. They see that writing helps them to organize their thoughts, study for tests, and build vocabulary. Some also value writing as helping them to express their emotions and work through their problems. They do not

value writing for someone else's purpose, or when they perceive there is no purpose at all.

A key to positive student attitudes toward writing and teaching writing is their ability to reflect on their identity as writers (Winer, 1992). According to numerous experts in the field (Boling, 1994; DeAngelis, 1995; Doyle, 1993; Walsh, 1989), one of the ways this can best be accomplished is through journal writing, which at least one teacher educator identified as being a form of writing students do well. Though expressed by many preservice teachers in this study to be their preferred mode of writing and one in which they are able to see their growth as both learners and writers, it is also the least used form of writing in the teacher education classes surveyed in this study. Perhaps this is why teacher educators in this study tend to describe student attitude toward writing as more negative than what is expressed by the students themselves.

Sandman and Weiser (1992) suggest having students assess their own competencies as writers through writing autobiographies in journal format. In these, students write about positive and negative experiences as writers as well their own writing strengths and weaknesses, in much the same way as done by students participating in the present study. As Winer (1992) states, "having to write in journals acts as what might be called a powerful trigger to awareness" and development as a writer (p. 64). According to Richardson (1992), students who have examined their own attitudes about writing and their identities as writers will be better prepared to teach writing. Many future secondary teachers participating in this study expressed a greater awareness of their

identities as writers as a result of the journal entries exploring those identities.

The Influence of Evaluation on Writing Apprehension

Trends in responses to statements on the WAM in this study regarding self-confidence in writing seem to shift about 20% when the statement specifically refers to the writing being evaluated. However, based on previous findings, the extent of this specific influence on writing perception might be expected. Winer (1992) identified four problems with writing experienced by student teachers from Southern Illinois University, the first being their "dread of writing," especially when it is graded. Likewise, Buley-Meissner (1989) found in a study of college freshmen that apprehension was greatest when there was a "threat" of evaluation. The same appears to be true in this study. Time and time again, the preservice teachers participating inferred a drop in self-confidence as a writer when external evaluation was involved. As Walsh (1986) describes, many students seem to see the writing process as a "trap in which they are required to demonstrate their shortcomings" (p. 4).

When identifying to what they attribute a lack of desire or self-confidence to write, students most often related experiences with negative teacher comments or marks, or as Horning (1987) describes, to teachers with their "red pens poised for a pounce." Furthermore, in a factor analysis of the same Daly-Miller scale used in this study and many others, Bizzaro and Toler (1986) identified evaluation apprehension as being the primary type of apprehension associated with writing, stating further that writing apprehension is often the result of adverse teacher

responses to writing, especially early attempts at writing. Frager (1994) agrees that teacher criticism is a strong force in shaping the identity of a writer.

It is impossible to overestimate the influence of teacher response to student writing on their perceptions of themselves as writers (Walsh, 1992). Teacher feedback is a major source of student self-concept (Pajeras & Johnson, 1994), and is often misunderstood by students (Sperling, 1984). When feedback on writing is too intent on grammar and mechanics, it can "batter the ego" and produce anxiety for students (Horning, 1987). As Rinehammer (1992) contends, students become "paralyzed" by the rules. In the present study, much of the reported fear and poor self-concept associated with teacher evaluation had to do with past experiences of embarrassment over making grammatical, mechanical and spelling errors on written assignments.

In a review of research on writing instruction over the past couple of decades, Zellermayer (1990) reports that traditional writing instruction which emphasizes rules and regulations has not been successful in helping struggling writers with their problems. On the other hand, researchers have shown that with writing instructors who de-emphasize grades, rules, and rigid formats, student writers not only show improved attitudes toward writing, but demonstrate increased mastery of writing conventions as well (Davis, 1987; Fear, 1990). Nevertheless, results from the present study appear to indicate that an emphasis on rules and conventions is still common among teacher educators, at least in the focus of their feedback on written assignments.

Desire For More Instruction in Writing

Writing apprehension was also found to be significantly related to the expressed desire or need for more instruction in writing. In fact, not a single respondent categorized as highly apprehensive agreed with the statement on the WAM, "I do not need instruction in writing." Walsh (1989) found similar responses in a study of college students in California, that highly apprehensive writers generally want to be helped. Perhaps even more noteworthy is that two-thirds of those respondents from the present study classified as having low levels of writing apprehension also professed a need for more instruction in writing. It is apparent that students of all levels of confidence felt they would benefit from more writing instruction. The teacher educators surveyed agreed.

Hodges and Bevington-Nash (1982) and Anspaugh (1984) are among those who declare that we need more required writing courses in teacher education. But who should provide this writing instruction? White (1989) recommends that every prospective teacher be required to take a course on teaching writing offered by a writing specialist in the English department, and that in the course, these future teachers write constantly. Shuman (1990) and Sitler (1993) contend, however, that English teachers do not have the expertise or the vocabulary to teach students writing in each of the different disciplines and that entrusting the problem to the English department usually doesn't work.

In his assessment of the Writing Across the Curriculum program at the University of Missouri at Columbia, Weinberg (1993) recognizes a multi-disciplinary approach as being crucial. Still others, such as those with the Advanced Writing Proficiency project (Watson & Traxler, 1992), claim success under the auspices of the education department. Whether

this writing instruction should be the responsibility of the English department, of the education department, or the various content areas remains a subject for debate. Nevertheless, most experts agree with Smit (1991), that *all* teachers, not just those teaching English, need to promote and teach writing.

Preservice Teachers' Attitudes and Apprehension Toward Teaching Writing

Eighty percent of the student teachers in this study responded that they plan to teach writing in their classroom, indicating an overall positive disposition in assuming this role. Furthermore, their beliefs about the importance of writing in every class, as evident by both student teachers' low mean responses to items about writing across the curriculum on the TWQ and journal entries of prospective secondary teachers, are similar to those of composition scholars (Richardson, 1992) and more positive than beliefs about writing across the curriculum found in previous studies of preservice teachers (Kamman, 1990).

Not only did they express good general intentions toward teaching writing, the preservice teachers participating in this study expressed many specific ideas for teaching writing which are supported by the literature on effective writing instruction, including providing students with more time to practice writing (Graves, 1996; Smit, 1991; Walsh, 1986), capitalizing on students' interests and choices when assigning writing tasks (Polin, 1993; Sutton, 1992; Rinehammer, 1992; Weinberg, 1993; Winer, 1992), finding ways to make writing less threatening (Buley-Meissner, 1989; Frankinburger, 1991; Harris, 1995), teaching

writing as an on-going process (Donlan, 1986; Ruszkiewicz, 1987), encouraging students to connect their writing with their reading (Healy, 1995), and writing with their students (Atwell, 1991; Deen, 1992; Graves, 1984; Kail, 1986).

However, two findings pertaining to the attitudes and apprehensions of preservice teachers toward writing instruction are less positive and cause for concern. First, the preservice teachers participating in this study are not confident in evaluating the writing of others. Secondly, even though they have good intentions and plan to teach writing, many of these future teachers do not want to teach writing. Teaching writing appears to be something most future teachers are willing to do, but only if they have to.

Confidence in Evaluating the Writing of Others

Overwhelmingly, the preservice teachers in this study expressed a belief that teachers should provide students with positive and constructive feedback on all writing done in school. However, less than half of the students surveyed here felt confident in critiquing another person's writing and a majority of preservice teachers felt that writing assignments are difficult to grade. Winer (1992) also identified the role of evaluator as being an area of insecurity for preservice teachers. Whereas Liggett's (1986) contention that this is a task that proves difficult for *all* beginning teachers might be a bit extreme, it is surely an apprehension or weakness felt by many, as evidenced here. Even so, the fact that 77% of those who have low levels of writing apprehension are confident in evaluating writing while only 9% of highly apprehensive writers are also confident may shed light on an important connection between the

teacher as a writer and the teaching of writing. It is evident from the results of this study that the more confident the writer, the more confident the evaluator.

Gaining confidence as an evaluator of writing comes with experience, but this experience should begin during the training of teachers, before they enter the classroom. At Louisiana State University, Liggett (1986) had teaching assistants grade the same papers twice, once at the beginning of the term and again at the end, and analyze the difference in their processes. They also got feedback from the students on the assignments they graded, and were mentored by an experienced grader. Liggett concluded that the experience made a difference in their feelings of confidence as evaluators. It seems reasonable that similar hands-on training procedures could be applied to most teaching methods courses, especially through collaborative relationships with local schools.

Desire to Teach Writing

It would appear from the results of this study that many students, even those who believe in their responsibility to teach writing and plan to do so, do not have the desire to teach writing. However, as is evidenced in this study, this is more true for those who are apprehensive about writing themselves. It has been shown that writing apprehension itself directly influences if writing is taught (Anspaugh, 1984; Daly, 1985). Therefore, it is also reasonable to believe that motivation to teach writing impacts instructional practice as well. While 80% of those preservice teachers with low writing apprehension indicated that they want to teach writing, only 16% of the high apprehensive writers indicated the same.

Research shows that apprehensive writers avoid writing tasks in general (Hillocks, 1986), academic disciplines perceived as writing intensive (Charney, *et al.*, 1995), and career avenues which require a great deal of writing (Davis, 1987; Riffe & Stacks, 1992). Why, therefore, do students who are apprehensive toward writing choose teaching as a career? A person suffering from math apprehension would be unlikely to choose accounting or engineering as a profession. Could it be that this is an aspect of teaching they do not consider until well into their program? In this case, that is very likely, as there was no mention of the identity of the teacher as a writer in any of the outlines for introductory education courses.

Addressing Writing and the Teaching of Writing in Teacher Education

The fact that 35% of the prospective teachers participating in this study did not feel trained well by their teacher education program to teach writing, or that an additional 29% were uncertain as to their level of preparation for this task, though disheartening, is not surprising. Throughout the literature, similar results abound. Bolling (1994) found that over half of the students at California State University at Stanislaus felt writing was insignificant in their course work. In a study of writing instructors from 17 community colleges in Washington state, Loucks (1995) found that 60% felt poorly prepared by their undergraduate and graduate program to teach writing. Few reported having any course at all in writing instruction. This lack of training in teaching writing is what Soter (1987) calls the " most persistent problem" in writing instruction (p. 435). Others (Bridge & Hiebert, 1985; Brinkley, 1993; Silberman,

1989; White, 1989) document teacher education programs' failure to teach teachers how to teach writing.

Training Teachers to Teach Writing

Two-thirds of the teacher educators surveyed did not feel that training teachers how to teach writing was a goal of their instruction, and only one teacher educator identified this as a primary goal. As the review of course outlines and state competency guidelines suggest, instruction geared toward this end is received by prospective elementary teachers in their language arts methods course, and for secondary teachers not preparing to teach English or Foreign Language, this instruction is relegated to a single course in content area reading and writing.

According to White (1989), many education departments are unaware that changes are needed in training writing teachers. This would appear to be true, at least, for some of the individual teacher educators participating in this study who expressed the assumption that this aspect of teacher training was addressed sufficiently in some course other than their own. There is also evidence in the review of course outlines of this misconception at the department and college level. Other than those courses in language arts and reading which, as White (1989) says, "may cast a brief glance at writing," most courses do not address the role of the classroom teacher in teaching writing. Finally, a review of the teacher competencies prepared by the State Department of Education who licenses these teachers suggests that the need for courses on how to teach writing is not sufficiently addressed at that level as well.

Developing the Teacher as a Writer

More teacher educators participating in this study seemed to accept responsibility for helping preservice teachers develop as writers as do those who identify with the role of training writing teachers. Perhaps this is because of the overt connection between how well these future teachers write and their performance as students in the courses taught by these educators. Nevertheless, almost all of the teacher educators surveyed reported writing comments on student papers and trying to be positive when giving feedback. They also expressed the beliefs that, through giving clear directions, rewarding effort, and modeling a positive attitude, they were reducing the writing apprehension of their students. Based on the literature, they are largely correct in these beliefs and practices.

Donlan (1990) found that by giving clear directions for assignments, using simple and non-threatening evaluation schemes, showing how writing assignments relate to previously completed assignments, and letting students submit assignments with a masked identity, writing apprehension was reduced. Horning (1987) and Frankinburger (1991) recommend, to reduce writing apprehension, teachers must work with students to understand errors analytically and to give students the freedom to be wrong without risk of embarrassment. Students need to be able to view writing as a non-threatening risk-taking process, and teachers must work to build in opportunities for students to be successful. Other researchers report positive reductions in writing apprehension from tutoring (Harris, 1995), writing on computers (Snyder, 1993), working in a writing center (Taylor-Escoffery, 1993), and even meditation (Campbell, 1992), just to name a few.

Though these interventions may prove useful in treating and reducing writing apprehension in students, the most promising avenue to be pursued by individual teacher educators toward the development of teachers as writers, and one which was related by only one teacher educator participating in this study, is the initiation of a process approach to writing in their classes. In actuality, most of the interventions mentioned above would fit somewhere into the scheme of a process-oriented approach. For instance, one of the most effective ways to show students that error is inherent when writing and to establish a comfortable environment for taking risks is by emphasizing the process of revision (Horning, 1987), an important stage of writing usually overlooked and misunderstood by students with writing apprehension (Daly, 1985; Selfe, 1984).

Ruszkiewicz (1987) describes how he came to realize the importance of this pedagogical shift. In the training of graduate teaching assistants for freshman composition at the University of Texas at Austin, Ruszkiewicz found himself constantly directing his trainees to teach more writing. In his own classes, however, he continued to teach the most important theories *about* writing. Ruszkiewicz recognized his graduate assistants' insecurities about teaching and their problems in applying their knowledge of writing to help others, but not until he made what he called an "elementary observation" and shifted to a process approach in his own classes, did all this begin to change. Students began to *write* rather than *talk about writing*. They shared their own writing and edited together. The results then transferred over to his trainees' own classes. They visited each others' classes. They worked through the process of writing a term paper with their students. Ruszkiewicz reports that he

and his students loved the process method, especially the opportunity to prepare drafts and read each others' papers, concluding that, "like writing itself, the training of writing teachers becomes dynamic and challenging when viewed as a process."

Brinkley (1993) also reports using a process approach to developing teachers as writers and teachers of writing. In her course in writing for elementary teachers at Western Michigan University, Brinkley has students write and share their writing with each other, and reflect on the implications of their own writing experiences for their teaching. Toward the end of the course, these future teachers conduct two, two-hour long writing workshops in an elementary classroom. In a post-course survey, Brinkley found that 50% of her students had a changed attitude toward writing, and 44% had changed their attitudes toward teaching writing. Like Brinkley, Shrofel (1991) too saw the development and growth of her students as teachers of writing resulting from much the same approach.

The process approach to writing and teaching writing also requires teachers to find time to work with students one-on-one (Horning, 1987). Through conferences, teachers can help students deal with the work assigned, but more importantly, they can communicate to the student that writing problems are not insurmountable. This is a key to fostering confidence in students. In the present study, about one-fifth of the teacher educators surveyed reported using conferences, at least on occasion.

Green (1995) describes a method for conferencing that has proven successful for her. Because she teaches more than 100 students per term and likes to schedule several conferences with each one, she follows

a specific format to make the best use of the time. First, students are expected to come to the conference with one question about the essay they are writing. Secondly, she asks probing questions to get at main points of the essay or most crucial decisions regarding the development of the essay. Finally, the student must state what they have discovered about their writing and how they intend to apply their new knowledge in their writing.

In addition to having individual conferences with the student, the teacher can establish writing response groups in the class. This "community of writers," as it is often called, can be the most important ingredient in the development of a writer (White, 1994). A number of studies document the positive effect of working with groups. Phillips (1992) describes how groups formed to work together on original stories helped students to overcome their own insecurities of their writing abilities. Keffer et al. (1996) and Hansen (1985) report the same effect, as members of their group of teachers collectively came to feel like writers over time and experienced significantly reduced anxiety about writing. This, in turn, resulted in noticeable improvement in teaching their students to write and share.

Because of the dynamics involved in group encounters, there may be numerous reasons why groups seem to work so well with some developing writers. Fox (1980) attributes this phenomenon to an "elevated sense of trust" established in groups. Brinkley (1993) describes a "kind of catharsis" which occurs when peers share and accept each others' experiences and beliefs. Nevertheless, judging from the numerous claims in the research literature and among prospective teachers participating in this study of reduced writer anxiety and

increased writer identity resulting from group membership, this appears to be one of the most promising methods yet for writer development. It should be noted, however, that only one of the teacher educators surveyed here reported using writing groups as described above. That 33% of the prospective teachers surveyed were uncertain whether or not discussing writing with others is enjoyable, and an even greater percentage were not able to say if others enjoyed reading their writing, is further indication that writing response groups are not common, at least in the teacher education program examined in this study.

CONCLUSION

Recommendations for Teacher Education Programs

Among other things, this study offers new insights in the examination of preservice teachers' identity as a teacher of writing and the relationship of that identity to their degree of apprehension as a writer. As shown in the discussion of these issues and in looking closely at the perceptions, attitudes and apprehensions toward writing and teaching writing of one group of future teachers, there is a need for improvement in teacher education programs in more effectively developing future teachers' identities as writers and writing teachers. It is encouraging that despite serious shortcomings in their teacher preparation programs in addressing these issues, these future teachers exhibit a great deal of knowledge and insight into teaching writing. Still, emerging from this discussion are some strong implications for

improvement of teacher education programs in better developing writers and future teachers of writing. Some of these are listed below:

1. When creating writing assignments, teacher educators should allow for more student choice, provide for a variety of writing purposes and audiences, and capitalize on what students value in writing. Student "voice" should be paramount. Journals should be used extensively as tools for expression and reflection.

2. Teacher educators should strive to make evaluation of writing less threatening through positive and constructive guidance, an emphasis on revision, and by de-emphasizing, as much as possible, conventional rules and mechanics. Teacher educators should adopt a process approach to writing, making time to hold individual conferences with students and allowing them to work extensively in writing response groups. Efforts should be made in all teacher education classes to reduce writing apprehension of students.

3. Students should be provided more instruction in writing and the teaching of writing. Freshmen composition courses will not develop competent and confident writers, and singular inclusion of teaching writing in a language arts class or a content reading course is not sufficient in developing competent teachers of writing. Students should be given many opportunities to write, and they should also be given hands-on experiences in teaching writing. Likewise, students should be given instruction in and opportunities to practice techniques for evaluating others writing.

4. The teacher's identity as a writer needs to be addressed early in the teacher education program and in career advisement. Prospective

teachers should begin to examine their own attitudes and perceptions of writing as soon as they choose to become teachers.

5. Faculty responsible for developing writers and teachers of writing need to be trained to do so. As Healy (1995) suggests, a central focus of this training should be to foster teachers' examination of their own writing processes and to encourage collegial sharing of successful strategies for working with student writers.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the above recommendations, there are at least three general areas which merit additional research. First, as specific attempts are made to include more writing instruction and training in teaching writing in teacher education programs, these efforts will need to be described and evaluated to determine to what extent they are successful. Secondly, as preservice teachers such as those participating in this study begin their teaching careers, follow-up studies will be needed to determine how their attitudes and apprehensions toward writing and teaching writing are changed or influenced by practice. Finally, because efforts to change teacher education programs to include more writing instruction have faltered and/or failed in the past, research is needed to explore teacher educators' and policy makers' attitudes on the issues, and determine why change toward improving teacher education in this regard is so often met with resistance.

The state of writing in our nation is at a point of crisis. We know more about how to teach writing than is evident from our practice as teachers and teacher educators. Although there is no simple solution,

those of us who train teachers must accept a great deal of the responsibility for this problem and continue to implement changes in our own programs that will put better teachers of writing in our nation's classrooms.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am going through the following teacher education program:

_____ Early Childhood (K-3)
_____ Elementary School (K-4)
_____ Elementary School (5-8)
_____ Special Education
_____ K-12 (check all that apply)

_____ art	_____ music	_____ P.E.

_____ Secondary School (check all that apply)

_____ English	_____ science	_____ social studies/history
_____ math	_____ business education	_____ marketing
_____ agriculture	_____ foreign language	_____ industrial studies
_____ speech/drama	_____ home economics	_____ health

OTHER:_____

Directions: Below are a series of statements about writing and teaching writing. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Please indicate the degree to which each statement applies to you by circling whether you (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) are uncertain, (4) disagree, or (5) strongly disagree with the statement. While some of these statements may be repetitious, take your time and try to be as honest as possible. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

	SA	A	UN	D	SD
1. I avoid writing.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I have no fear of my writing being evaluated.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I look forward to writing down my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Teachers in my field do not have to be writers.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am afraid of writing essays when I know they will be evaluated.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Teachers should write along with their students.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Handing in a composition makes me feel good.	1	2	3	4	5
8. My mind seems to go blank when I start to work on a composition.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Expressing ideas through writing seems to be a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Writing assignments are difficult to grade.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I would enjoy submitting my writing to magazines for evaluation and publication.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I like to write my ideas down.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I feel confident in critiquing another person's writing.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Writing should be incorporated in all classes.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I feel confident in my ability to clearly express my ideas in writing.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I like to have my friends read what I have written.	1	2	3	4	5

	SA	A	UN	D	SD
17. I'm nervous about writing.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Writing is more important in some classes than others.	1	2	3	4	5
19. People seem to enjoy what I write.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I do not need instruction in writing.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I enjoy writing.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I never seem to be able to clearly writedown my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Writing is a lot of fun.	1	2	3	4	5
24. All teachers should be writers.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I expect to do poorly in composition classes even before I enter them.	1	2	3	4	5
26. I like seeing my thoughts on paper.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I plan to use writing regularly in my classes when I teach.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Discussing my writing with others is enjoyable	1	2	3	4	5
29. I have a terrible time organizing my ideas when writing.	1	2	3	4	5
30. When I hand in a composition, I know I'm going to do poorly.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Mathematics does not lend itself well to writing.	1	2	3	4	5
32. It's easy for me to write good compositions.	1	2	3	4	5
33. When teaching, I will try to correct all of my students' writing mistakes.	1	2	3	4	5
34. I don't think I write as well as most other people.	1	2	3	4	5
35. I don't like my compositions to be evaluated.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Whether or not I write has no bearing on my students' writing.	1	2	3	4	5
37. I'm no good at writing.	1	2	3	4	5
38. I want to teach writing.	1	2	3	4	5
39. Taking a composition course is a very frightening experience	1	2	3	4	5
40. My teacher education program has trained me well to teach writing.	1	2	3	4	5

TEACHER EDUCATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Please check the area(s) below that relate to your primary instructional assignments:

_____ early childhood _____ elementary education

_____ secondary education _____ administration/supervision

_____ special education OTHER: _____

2. Please indicate your years experience as a teacher educator.

____ 0-5 ____ 6-10 ____ 11-15 ____ 16-25 ____ 26+

3. What type(s) of writing are required in your courses? Please indicate U for undergraduate and G for graduate.

_____ journal _____ essays on tests _____ reviews of literature

_____ research papers _____ lesson plans/ units

OTHER: _____

4. What type of written or verbal feedback do your students receive from you for their writing?

_____

_____

_____

5. To what extent is writing apprehension addressed in your courses?

____ not at all ____ incidentally ____ directly

Comments: _____

_____

6. Is it a goal of your instruction to train preservice teachers how to teach writing?

____ yes, to a great extent ____ yes, to some extent ____ no

If yes, how? _____

_____

_____

If no, why not? _____

_____

_____

7. How would you rate the writing ability of <u>most</u> of your students?

___ excellent ___ satifactory ___ poor

Comments: _____

_____

8. How would you describe most of your students' attitudes toward writing as demonstrated in your class?

___ positive ___ neutral ___ negative

Comments: _____

_____

9. Is there anything else you would like to say about your students' writing or your approach to writing in the course(s) you teach?

Comments: _____

_____

_____

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